no such request has come and if it comes, we would be very very happy to examine it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What about the royal coaches?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA: Sir, this Palace on Wheels has been constituted by the socalled royal coaches, saloons dating back to the last century—the Railways had them all over the country—some from Hyderabad, some from Rajasthan. They collected them, renovated them and that is how the State has come into existence and if there is a demand and economically viable project can be framed, the Railways would also like to do so.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Mr. Chairman, Sir I fully agree with the hon. Minister that Rajasthan provides a real glory to the tourist but, Sir, beautiful, incomparable architectural and sculptural works are there in the South which provide enormous feast to the eyes of tourists both domestic and foreign.

Sir, since the young Maharaja who is handling the Railway Ministry is from the North, this privilege is reserved only for the North. In order to promote tourism in India, will the Central Government, *suo motu*, take steps to provide this privilege and facility in the South also?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA: Sir, the Government of India is taking a lot of steps to develop tourism. But so far as Palace on Wheels is concerned, it was started in 1981 much before the present Railway Minister took over and there is no question of any discrimination. The North and the South have great tourist attractions and many schemes have been operated as well as implemented to promote tourism in Southern region.

SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Sir, my supplementary was on air conditioning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, it has been asked.

Introduction of visa restrictions for Indian immigrants

*83. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL:†
SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken up the matter regarding introduction, of visa restrictions by British Government on the immigrants from five non-white nations; and

(b) if so, what is British Government's reaction thereto and whether they are willing to abolish the visa restrictions or make any relaxation for Indians in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No favourable response has been received so far, but the matter remains under consideration of the two Governments.

SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, as stated by the hon. Minister, the Government of India have taken up the matter with the British Government. May I draw the attention of hon. Minister to a statement made by the British M.P. Mr. Jeremy Corbyn from Islington who is reported to have said that there is evidence of discrimination against

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Krishna Kaul.

non-whites with the introduction of visa restrictions which are discriminatory and inhuman. There is 90 times greater chance of non-white immigrants being detained, suspected and harassed from the very moment they touch the British soil at Heathrow Airport. There is deliberate understaffing of their immigration office in India and Bangladesh that this is being done with the ulterior motive of denying entry to genuine immigrants from this part of the third world. Is it not an indirect approval of the apartheid that is opposed by all civilised people of the world? The honourable Minister in his reply has stated that so far no favourable response has been received and the matter is still under consideration. May I know at what stage have the negotiations reached and what further steps does the Government propose taking to impress upon the Thatcher Government to revise its policy of visa restrictions against the non-whites?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Quite apart from what the British M.P. has said, our own reaction to the restrictions imposed from the 15th of October 1986 by the United Kingdom has been "Yes, these restrictions are racial and discriminatory in character". What happened on 15th October 1986 was that the UK Government introduced visa restrictions for citizens of only five Commonwealth countries—three countries of the Indian Sub-Continent plus Nigeria and Ghana. They have not yet enforced the visa restrictions as far as Nigeria and Ghana are concerned but they have enforced them in-regard to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Actually the new policy has been in two phases. The visa restrictions were introduced or announced for the five countries on 15th October 1986. Subsequently, the heavier approach to the question of visa by the British Government was when they announced on 7th November 1986 a step increase in visa fees for both single entry as well as multiple entry as also long-term entry. We were compelled to reciprocate these. As regards attempts to mollify or ease the situation, while the Britishers would like us to concentrate only on the question of visa restrictions, we thought that the better approach is an overall discussion both on the question of visa as well as consular matters including the question of extradition.

SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: May I know whether the Government of India propose to take up this matter in the next Commonwealth Conference. And, of course, the second part of that question is in the meanwhile whether you would take reciprocal steps towards UK nationals visiting India.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: We have already taken reciprocal steps. We are discussing this at bilateral level both in London as well as in Delhi in our meetings with our British counterparts. We do not at the moment contemplate taking this to the multinational forum of the Commonwealth.

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: The introduction of visa restrictions on the immigrants from the five non-white nations is racist and discriminatory and inhuman. Since the honourable Minister was going round the world—he has been to African countries to deal with the problem of South Africa—I would like to know whether he was having bilateral discussions or whether he has personally taken up this matter with his counterpart there in Britain. These restrictions go against the very concept of the Commonwealth. Has he taken up directly with his counterpart with British Government to solve this issue?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Yes, our Government has taken up this matter with the British Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now Mr. Jaswant Singh.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: My question has been answered.

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: From the attitude of the British Government it seems that our relationship with the Common-wealth is getting ornamental. This was reflected on the question of South Africa and now on this specific question. Will you, therefore, kindly reconsider whether, in view of this situation, we should continue our relationship with the Commonwealth.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Sir, I have already submitted that we are unhappy that this has been done by the British Government to some of the countries of the Commonwealth.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Question. Question No. 84 .

*84. [*The Questioners (Shri Ram Naresh Kushawaha and Shri V. Naryanasamy) were absent. For answer; vide* col 37-38 infra].

MR. CHAIRMAN: Both are absent. What am I to do? A lot of disappointment to those who want to put supplementaries! Next Question. Question No. 85. Mr. B. Satyanarayan Reddy.

Theft of antiques

*85. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether investigations into the cases of thefts and attempts to send out of the country a large number of antiques in January, 1987 have been completed;

(b) if so, what is the outcome thereof and whether persons involved have been prosecuted; and

(c) what are the details of the art pieces recovered by the police?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Investigations by the Central Bureau of Investigation with regard to idols and antiques recovered by it on 25th January, 1987 and 4th and 5th February, 1987 are in progress. Three persons have been arrested and are now in judicial custody.

(c) 214 antique objects of various materials like black stone, sand stone, terracotta and also metals like bronze, etc. belonging to periods ranging between 2nd Century B.C. and 12th Century were recovered between 25th January, 1987 and 5th February, 1987.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Reddy.

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Sir, every year valuable antiques are being stolen and they are being sent abroad and these antiques have been unauthorisedly sent out of the country and the value of these antiques comes to crores of rupees. Sir, according to the Archaeological Survey of India, many of these 214 antiques are over one thousand years old and three main sculptures, that is, a 20"-high stone idol of Goddess Kali, a 17"-high sculpture of Lord Garuda and his consort and a stone head of Lord Shankar were demoved from the temple of Garwa village near Hardoi where they have been kept for some time. The other ones are believed to have been removed from the temples, monuments and excavations in and around Jhansi, Kanauj, Gwalior and Kanpur. I would like to know from the honourable Minister, apart from these, how many other temples and historical places are there where these valuable antiques are existing or how many other monuments are there from where these antiques have been removed and I would also like to know from the honourable Minister what concrete steps have been taken by the Government to protect these monuments and to recover these stolen antiques.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, with great respect, I would like to point out that I am concerned, the Ministry of Home Affairs is concerned, with this particular crime which has been detected. If the honourable Member